



# Muslims in America

Information Package | Information Resource Center | U.S. Embassy Jakarta



## U.S. Muslims Compared with Muslim Worldwide

A new Pew Research Center survey of Muslims around the globe finds that most adherents of the world's second-largest religion are deeply committed to their faith and want its teachings to shape not only their personal lives but also their societies and politics. In the U.S, based on 2001 Pew Research, American Muslims' attitudes toward modern society and their relations with people of other faiths, sometimes more closely resemble other Americans than they do Muslims around the world.

### •Faith of Close Friends

About half of U.S. Muslims say that all (7%) or most (41%) of their close friends are followers of Islam, and half say that some (36%) or hardly any (14%) of their close friends are Muslim. By contrast, Muslims in other countries nearly universally report that all or most of their close friends are Muslim (global median of 95%). Even Muslims who also are religious minorities in their countries are less likely than U.S. Muslims to have friendships with non-Muslims. For example, 78% of Russian Muslims and 96% of Thai Muslims say most or all of their close friends are Muslim.

### •Path to Eternal Life

A majority of U.S. Muslims (56%)

believe that many religions can lead to eternal life. Most Americans (65%), including nearly two-thirds of American Christians (64%), share this view. Across the world, however, this attitude is far less common among Muslims: a median of just 18% of Muslims worldwide think religions other than Islam can lead to eternal life.

### •Religion and Contemporary Society

Most U.S. Muslims (63%) say there is no inherent tension between being devout and living in a modern society. A nearly identical proportion of American Christians (64%) agree. Around the world, somewhat fewer Muslims (global median of 54%) share the view that modern life and religious devotion are not at odds.

### •Religion and Science

The picture is more complicated when it comes to matters of science and religion. Roughly six-in-ten U.S. Muslims (59%) say there is generally no conflict between science and religion. Globally, about half of Muslims (median of 54%) agree. But among U.S. Christians (39%) and the U.S. general public (37%) smaller shares view religion and science as generally compatible. On the question of evolution, U.S. Muslims are split: 45%

believe humans and other living things have evolved over time, while 44% disagree. U.S. Muslims are about as likely to believe in evolution as U.S. Christians (46% of whom say they believe in evolution). But Americans overall (52%) as well as Muslims worldwide (median of 53%) lean more clearly toward accepting evolution.

### •Violence in Defense of Islam

More than eight-in-ten American Muslims say suicide bombings and other forms of violence against civilian targets are never justified (81%) or rarely justified (5%) to defend Islam from its enemies. Worldwide, most Muslims also reject this type of violence, with a median of 72% saying such attacks are never justified and 10% saying they are rarely justified. Just 1% of U.S. Muslims and a median of 3% of Muslims worldwide say suicide bombings and other violence against civilian targets are often justified, while 7% of U.S. Muslims and a global median of 8% of Muslims say such attacks are sometimes justified to defend Islam.

Read more:

2013 Survey on Muslim Around the Globe: <http://goo.gl/L8PnZ>

2011 Survey on Muslim Americans: <http://goo.gl/KZbjo>

July 2013

Each Ramadan, the ninth month on the lunar calendar, Muslims fast daily from dawn to sunset for 29 or 30 days. Fasting is a tradition in many religious faiths and is meant to increase spirituality, discipline, thankfulness, and consciousness of God's mercy. Ramadan is also a time of giving and reaching out to those less fortunate.

This info package is created to mark Ramadan, which begins on the evening of July 9.

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### U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

The U.S. Mission partners with Indonesia to strengthen the bonds between our people and our governments to promote and protect democracy, security, and sustainable prosperity for our people, the region, and the world.



## Muslim Americans: Highlights

### Muslim Americans Population

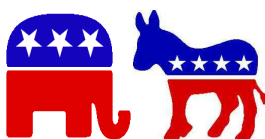
2010 survey on global Muslim population by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life found there were 2.6 million Muslims, including adults and children, in the country. And a 2011 survey by the same research group found 2.75 million Muslims, including 1.8 million adults. <sup>1)</sup>

Slightly more than one-third (35 percent) of Muslims in America are native-born. More than half of native-born Muslims are African American. African Americans constitute 20 percent of the entire U.S. Muslim population. Many are converts to Islam. <sup>2)</sup>

### Muslim Americans and Assimilation

Most Muslim Americans seem well-integrated into American society, and about two-thirds say that the quality of life for Muslims in the U.S. is better than in most Muslim countries. <sup>3)</sup>

### Muslim Americans' Political Attitude



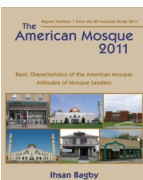
Most Muslim Americans either identify as Democrats or lean toward the Democratic Party. Nearly

half (48%) of U.S. Muslims say they feel that the GOP is unfriendly toward them. By contrast, just 7% say the Democratic Party is unfriendly toward Muslim Americans. <sup>4)</sup>

### Attendance at Worship Services

Like U.S. Christians, many U.S. Muslims are highly religious. Fully 69% say that religion is very important in their lives, compared with 70% of Christians. And almost half of both U.S. Muslims and U.S. Christians report attending worship services at least weekly. <sup>5)</sup>

### American Mosque



The number of Islamic places of worship in the United States soared 74% in the past decade. Based on the American Mosque 2011 Survey number of mosques

quietly rose from 1,209 in 2000 to 2,106 in 2010.

Major findings include:

- States with the most mosques are New York (257), California (246) and Texas (166).
- Most mosques are in cities, but 28% were in suburban sites in 2010, up from 16% in 2000.
- Mosques are ethnically diverse. The major participants are South Asians, Arabs and African Americans, with growing numbers of new immigrants including Somalis, West Africans and Iraqis. The study did not include Nation of Islam mosques because it is a separate religion.
- Most mosque leaders (87%) say "radicalism and extremism" are not increasing among Muslim youth, "in their own experience." They say the greater challenge is "attracting and keeping them close to the mosque." <sup>6)</sup>

### Certified *Halal* in the USA



As the U.S. Muslim population increases, more authorized organizations certify food as *halal* — conforming to Muslim standards. Consumers who see

one of these organizations' symbols on a package know that the food is free from pork or anything *haram*, or forbidden. Certification ensures that Islamic guidelines for the slaughter and processing of meat have been observed.

The United States government is not involved in religious matters, which is why agencies such as the USDA do not certify *halal* or kosher foods. That must be done by religious authorities or those they sanction. USDA does inform exporters of other countries' import standards and directs exporters to U.S. *halal* certifiers approved by destination countries. ISWA is among those internationally recognized *halal* certifiers. <sup>7)</sup>

### Balancing Work and Religion

By law they have a right to reasonable accommodations to their schedules. They sometimes encoun-

ter resistance from coworkers or bosses. But in a growing number of court cases, employees have the law's enforcer, the EEOC, on their side. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bars employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Initially the EEOC said employers must accommodate employees' religious practices unless doing so created "serious inconvenience to the conduct of the business." <sup>8)</sup>

### Challenges, Worries and Concerns

While a majority of U.S. Muslims say that it is more difficult to be a Muslim in the U.S. since 9/11, most think the American people are generally friendly or neutral toward Muslim Americans. <sup>9)</sup>

% U.S. Muslims who say American people are...	
Friendly	48%
Neutral	32%
Unfriendly	16%
Don't Know	4%

Sources:

- 1) Muslim Americans: No Signs of Growth in Alienation or Support for Extremism/Pew Research Center, 2011. Link: <http://goo.gl/sXdap>
- 2) Who Are American Muslims?/IIPDigital, 2011 Link: <http://goo.gl/P5Jlq>
- 3) The American Mosque 2011/Ihsan Bagby. Faith Communities Today, 2012. Link: <http://goo.gl/zNrAA>
- 4) Certified *Halal* in the USA/IIP Digital, 2012 Link: <http://goo.gl/ZNIq>
- 5) Balancing Work and Religion/America.gov, 2008 Link: <http://goo.gl/64INi>



## Resources

### History of Islam in the U.S

**Encyclopedia of Muslim-American History**/edited by Edward E. Curtis. New York : Facts on File, 2010.

The encyclopedia introduces readers to a wide diversity of Muslim American people, ideas, and institutions

**Muslims in America : A Short History** / Edward E. Curtis. Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2009.

Showing how Muslim American men and women participated in each era of U.S. history.

**Photo Galleries of Important Historic Milestones for Muslims in America**/ IIPDigital, December 18, 2008

- Period 1619-1934  
Source: <http://goo.gl/cBCsU>
- Period 1957-2007 .  
Source: <http://goo.gl/6ls4y>

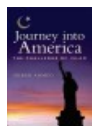
### Muslim Live in America

**eJournalUSA: Being Muslim in America**/ IIPDigital, March 2009.

The men, women and children in this publication demonstrate every day what it is like to be Muslim in America. This publication is available online at: <http://goo.gl/2Ta2j>

**Islam and America : Building a Future Without Prejudice** / Anouar Majid. Lanham [Md.] : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, c2012. This book argues that the current animosity between the U.S. and Muslim world should be understood through the often-overlooked history between the two.

**Islam in America** / Jane I. Smith. New York, NY : Columbia University Press, c2010  
This book introduces the basic tenets of the Muslim faith, surveys the history of Islam in North America, and profiles the lifestyles, religious practices, and worldviews of Muslims in the U.S.



**Journey into America : The Challenge of Islam** / Akbar Ahmed. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, c2010.

This book examines American identity as influenced by its founding and history and the diverse Muslim experience in America, as well as the experience of other religious groups, and how each has affected the other. See also: Text/Transcript of Podcast-Journey Into America: Muslim-American Diversity. IIPDigital, Aug 17, 2010 at <http://goo.gl/tChyq> or Listen to audio file (mp3) at <http://goo.gl/jDqYx>

**Moving the Mountain : Beyond Ground Zero to a New Vision of Islam in America** / Feisal Abdul Rauf. New York : Free Press, 2012.

The author explores the beliefs, aspirations, and ambitions, both spiritual and political, of American Muslims in a post-9/11 world.

**Videos: Profiles of Young Muslim-Americans**/by the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs in July 2011.

- Mihyar Osman, a Sudanese-American  
Watch the video: <http://goo.gl/M0FXc> ; <http://goo.gl/z3w0n>
- Iisraa Al-Sayyed, aPalestinian American  
Watch the video: <http://goo.gl/N9VKj> ; <http://goo.gl/N9VKj>
- Aly Ghanim, a Gambian-American  
Watch the video: <http://goo.gl/i39tG>
- Zainah Khan, an Indian-American from Saudi Arabia  
Watch the video: <http://goo.gl/i39tG>

### American Muslim Culture

**Sports in America: Before the Aspiring Heart**/by the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs in May, 2012

This video is about an Arab-American Muslim high

school football team that celebrates wins and religion and plays while fasting. They prove that you can be all-American as well as all-Muslim. Watch the video: <http://goo.gl/Pf9ZL>

**Muslim Rappers Use "Voice of Youth" To Promote Tolerance**/ IIPDigital, March 1, 2006. Native Deen shows positive image of Americans, Islam through hip-hop. Read more: <http://goo.gl/AWuX2>

**Photo Gallery of Muslim Performers**/ IIPDigital, Dec 24, 2008. See a gallery of successful Muslim-American performers, in fields ranging from music to comedy to acting at: <http://goo.gl/ikkEU>

**The Met Islamic Art Exhibit: Muslims and Their Heritage**/by the State Department's Bureau of IIP, Nov 2011. It features community members discussing the new exhibit of Islamic art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Watch the video: <http://goo.gl/pucw0>

### General Islam

**The Future of Islam**/John L. Esposito. New York : Oxford University Press, 2010.

In this book Esposito explores the major questions and issues that face Islam in the 21st century and that will deeply affect global politics.

**What's Right with Islam : A New Vision for Muslims and the West** / Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf. San Francisco : Harper San Francisco, c2004. The author discusses his work for religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue in the American Muslim community.

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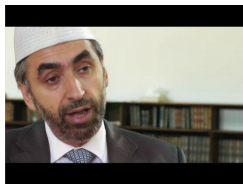
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# Ramadan in America

## Ramadan in America Is About Community



Imam Mohamad Bashir Arafat of the Muslim Community Center in Baltimore:

“Observing Ramadan in America, it’s different.

You will not see the shops close, like in other Muslim countries you will see most of the restaurants close during the day; you will not see people eating in the street. But the most important thing about Ramadan in America that it’s becoming a month where the community get together. You will see a wonderful example of diversity. Muslims from different parts of the world are getting together in the mosques. That’s regardless whether you are Sunna or Shia or different school of thoughts, we are all together. And, also, today Ramadan is becoming a month of outreach. It’s becoming a month of inviting our neighbors, colleagues, friends who are non-Muslims to come and experience a meal of breaking the fast - the iftar - with us. And this is something we are proud to have as Muslims living in America. The Koran says “The month of Ramadan in which the Koran was revealed as guidance for mankind,” not only

for Muslims. So when we invite our fellow citizens, whether they are from the people of the book - Christians and Jews - or others, to share the meal with us and strengthen these human bonds together - because we are all the family of Adam and Eve.” Watch the video at: <http://goo.gl/F0FmK>

## U.S. Muslims Reflect on Needs of Others During Ramadan

“A lot of people in the world have no food, no clean water,” said Khalid Iqbal of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS). “Ramadan promotes an understanding of people in need — their sufferings and deprivation.”

With seven branches in northern Virginia, ADAMS is one of the largest mosques and Muslim non-profit organizations in the Washington, D.C., suburbs, serving more than 5,000 families. Its members regularly engage in interfaith activities and offer assistance to Muslims and non-Muslims alike, said Iqbal, ADAMS deputy director and chief operating officer. Read more: <http://goo.gl/xoyXF>

## Man Gives Homeless a Voice for Ramadan

Like his fellow Muslims around the world, New

York City resident Yusef Ramelize will spend much of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan fasting, praying and performing charitable works. But for the fourth year in a row, he will help the needy in a unique way: by living on the streets for a week to better understand the plight of the homeless. Read more: <http://goo.gl/aeAqB>

## Ramadan at Princeton

“For me, Ramadan is a time to appreciate letting go of daily concerns about eating and drinking. It opens up a lot of time in my day for introspection, reflection, contemplation and drawing nearer to God”, said Sohaib Sultan, Muslim Chaplain at Princeton University. Read more: <http://goo.gl/ND1sj>

## Photo Galleries

Serving Iftar Across America

Link: <http://goo.gl/hu2pk>

Observing Ramadan Worldwide

Link: <http://goo.gl/aJx6y>

Eid al-Fitr in America

Link: <http://goo.gl/Q144l>



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